

IN THE SPANISH FORT

Treading in the Footsteps of Over
Three Centuries

VISIT TO THE OLD TORTURE CHAMBER

Relics of the Rack Used on Prisoners.

TELLING AN OFT-TOLD TALE

Staff Correspondence of The Evening Star.

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When all is said and done, and Florida has been traversed on both sides and through the middle, the fact remains that so far as the tourist interest for the tourist is concerned, St. Augustine is one of the best of the state. There is wonderful progress evident at Tampa, but nothing of the picturesque or novel outside of the big hotel. There is tropical luxuriance at Palm Beach and another big hotel. Along the Jupiter river is a succession of pretty spots, with interesting ruins, but none of any real value, and through the center are clean and pretty towns at intervals, surrounded by a few thousand cultivated acres, like oases in a desert of sandy pine woods and scrub thickets.

But St. Augustine, the ornate and the magnificent, the tropical part of it may indeed be artificial, so far as its being transplanted from lower latitudes is concerned, but it is none the less beautiful and inspiring. It is all so full of life and interest, side by side with them are shops that equal those of New York or Chicago in the character of the goods they sell. The most exacting of women of fashion can find here all that they want to suit her fancy, and in Jewels a

one can find everything, from a live chameleon to dead chromo, and run the gamut between the two. It's a little trouble. If it is hotels you are interested in, St. Augustine contains the finest in the world. The new and the old blend here in a way that makes the incongruity of the mixture seem the most natural thing in the world.

In Fort Marion.

Standing on the coquina battlements of the old Spanish fort that first felt the tread of a sentinel three and a half centuries ago, you gaze upon launches in the green water beating up and down. You do not think they should properly be galleons.

Sergeant Brown, who stands at your elbow, and descants for the millionth time on the history of the ancient fortress, is apparently the proper person in the proper place. He's a great personage, is Sergeant

dered at one time or another how an actor can play the same part six or eight times as often as a whole season without going stark, staring mad. The actor of Scudmore the thing, Sergeant Brown has rehearsed his description of Fort Marion not every day, but at least once a week, and he has a day for twenty days. With his much-flung keys, he carries visitors through, showing them the dungeons, the chapel, the guardhouse, the kitchen, the storeroom. Scudmore's brave were confined; the well dug by the Spaniards three hundred and fifty years ago is empty, the water supply, which cannot be pumped dry, as he says, is not there. You, and all the rest of it, glowing with affectionate eloquence over his fig trees, that he has seen in the garden of the convent above the moat, and never missing a word or skipping a characteristic elision. And all this story is interspersed with deep philosophy, and "my book," which is sagely reinforced by a display of the precious volume as you are about to leave the convent. The fifty per cent he asks for it, though, for the monument you take in following his guidance, the other fifty for the book.

"This was the penance chamber," he says when he unlocks the wooden door leading to

those now in daily use, doubtless, at the wall castle in Havana. "You see on the wall," he said, "the chains were fastened." Observe where the chains were fastened to the wall. On these crosses offenders were chained up. I saw barely touching the floor. The chains hung down from the ceiling, across the chests of the victims, and all were punished for from one to thirty-six hours because there was no place in the country so wonderful as this.

An uninviting opening into Tartarob darkness occupies a corner of the room and several torches are lit. Sergt. Brown strikes another, and another corpse to the pile after lighting the torch. He looks at me and smiles grimly through the opening. The flames of the wall torch wick makes grotesque figures on the wall that are near together and join in a curved ceiling.

Relic of the Rack.

"The chamber of torture," says Brown with pardonable triumph in his eye. "The timbers you perceive in the sides open," he reported the instrument called the rack. The victim was laid on it and his arms and legs attached to chains at the ends. By a movement of screws his limbs could be merely dislocated or he could be torn to pieces. This was the instrument of thequisition and another used here, as you see."

A noise came from the corner of the torture chamber looked more uncomfortable than what about three feet square. Sergt. Brown was animated when he put the torch down to it. "This leads to the most wonderful underground world," he said. "There were two iron doors which were found by accident first discovered. One opened out and the other opened in. Won't you stoop down

to walk at this step in the journey, but to look at the faces of the interred men, horrors! Sergeant Brown remembered that Spaniards treated the men who were placed here. It was the penitentiary of punishment for the soldiers of the United States. A little air, such pleasant forms of justice being fastened up in an iron cage and left to die, and other exquisite bits of Spanish justice, which the sergeant saw in the picture could not have added a thrilling finale to the recital. Then the sergeant shows you the places where Geronimo and his 500 Apaches were confined for a long time, the soldiers got them, and expatiates on the picture writing they left on the walls. Then he shows you the place where the sergeant says, "I have translated some Indian language and given a history of the Indian story."

It is simply delicious how he interlards his story with references to his book, yet he never asks one to purchase it. Only when you ask the price does he tell you of it and jilts you with the book. He is a one. Long may the sergeant swagger! He's in the ordnance, and believes articles of war are the best thing in the world to see after Fort Marion. When he points out the old Spanish guns, now dismounted and lying in the parade ground, where the soldiers of the United States were and thus deprived of all their real attraction.

"Think of the gun of today that carries 1,500 pounds of iron. There's not a boat in the world with a deck thick or tough enough to keep a shell like that from going through if it falls on it from high enough up."

The Spanish fort, like everything else in St. Augustine that is built to last, is formed of coquina, a peculiar formation of minute shells and sand, the animal life

The Ponce de Leon, with its massive walls is built of it; so are the Alcazar, the Cordova, the Casino and the churches. The quarries whence this concrete is taken are on Anastasia Island, which is now connected with St. Augustine by a bridge, and one of the prettiest drives in America, giving a magnificent view of the ocean, with enormous breakers foaming, leaping and seething in perpetual fury, is over to this delightful spot. CLUSKEY CROMWELL.

When Death is Certain.
From the Buffalo Times.

A miser had died very suddenly. The doctor who was called in to certify his death appeared to have his doubts about the case.

"Place a silver dollar in his hand," said the old housekeeper of the deceased. "If he does not grasp it, you may safely make out